NOV 2 1977

FBI to Release Kennedy Murder File

Washington

Nearly 14 years after President Kennedy's murder in Dallas the FBI is preparing to make public its massive "assassination file" containing all the material it gathered during its investigation of the case.

FBI officials said yesterday the first segment of the voluminous 80,000-page JFK file, covering the initial six months of the agency's probe, will be made available this month while the remainder is scheduled for public release in December. The disclosures are in response to more than 50 requests for the material under the Freedom of Information Act.

Critics of the official version of events surrounding the Nov. 22, 1963, slaying in Dallas have sought access to the FBI's raw files almost from the day the Warren Commission concluded Lee Harvey Oswald, acting alone, killed the president. Others have been intrigued by what the FBI developed which was not included in the Commission's 1964 report.

According to FBI officials, much of the data included in the assassination file already has been revealed through the testimony of witnesses before the Commission and in documents used as exhibits in its 26-volume report. The trial of Dallas nightclub owner Jack Ruby, Oswald's killer, brought out still more, they said.

However, these officials explained the FBI's internal file also includes reports on certain aspects of the assassination which were discarded during the course of the investigation. These included reports on possible leads which were never verified, speculation about the meaning of certain facts and theories about the killing which later were disproved in the view of FBI agents.

An FBI spokesman said the bureau had been working on the file's preparation for 2½ years. Last summer, 15 additional agents were assigned to the effort. He declined to name individuals who had filed requests for the material.

The disclosure, however, will not include documents the Warren Commission classified which are still sealed in the National Archives, the spokesman said. Nor will it include references to data the FBI received from other federal sources such as the Central Intelligence Agency or the Secret Service.

Under provisions of the Freedom of Information statute, the FBI is permitted to delete the names of informants and any references to classified material. One FBI source said a large number of the pages will be blank because of deletions.

While FBI personnel involved in the project maintain there has for the most part been little opposition to disclosing particulars of the investigation, a number expressed concern that portions of the file may be misinterpreted if taken out of context.

This is especially true, one FBI official said, concerning "speculative" reports in which FBI agents may have theorized about Oswald's travels or other such aspects only to reject it after further investigation. "Selective reading on some part like that would be very misleading," the official said.

Robert P. Gemberling, a retired Dallas FBI agent who coordinated and analyzed the investigative effort throughout the Kennedy probe, said according to his knowledge of the assassination file there will be no sensational revelations.

Dallas Times-Herald